

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 and 11-22 are pending in this application. Applicants' claims for priority are acknowledged, although the Examiner has noted that certified copies have not yet been filed. Claim 22 stands finally rejected under 35 SUC 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-4, 7, 11, 14 and 22 stand finally rejected as being unpatentable under 35 USC 103(a). Claims 5, 6, 9, 12 and 13 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 8 and 15-21 are allowed.

Claim of Priority:

The Applicants appreciate the acknowledgement of their claims for priority. Certified copies of German patent documents DE 10216662.5 and DE 10243558.8 are submitted together with this response. Since International Application PCT/DE03/00952 claims priority to these German patent applications, no certified copy of the PCT document should be required.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC 112 and 103:

Without acquiescing to the pending claim rejections, the Applicants offer the claim amendments presented herein in order to allow the application to pass to issue. The Applicants reserve the right to pursue additional claim protection for this invention in a continuing application.

The rejected claims are either cancelled herein or are amended to depend upon an allowed claim, as follows:

Rejected claims 1-3, 7 and 22 are cancelled.

Objected-to claims 5, 6 and 9 are placed into independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1.

Rejected claim 4 is made dependent upon allowable claim 9.

Rejected claims 11 and 14 are amended to depend from allowed claim 5.

Objected-to claims 12 and 13 are placed into independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1 and intervening claims 2 and 3 respectively.

New claim 23:

New claim 23 is added to depend from allowable claim 4. Whereas claim 4 allows for the molten area to have a substantially linear, elliptical or rectangular geometry, claim 23 is further limited to only the substantially rectangular geometry. Thus, no new search or examination is necessitated by the addition of this claim.

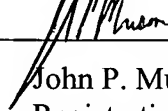
Conclusion:

Thus, claims 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11-21 and 23 remain in the application and are now in condition for allowance. Entry of this paper and allowance of the application to issue are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179

Respectfully submitted,

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